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SUBJECT: TURKEY: INTELLECTUALS OPPOSE MILITARY'S
ANTI-DEMOCRATIC METHODS

REF: ANKARA 1094

11. (U) SUMMARY AND COMMENT. A group of 500 intellectuals issued a declaration May 13 against the Turkish military's April 27 e-memorandum. Echoing the message of a May 7 statement by 205 intellectuals (reftel), the signatories rejected the e-memorandum: "We openly declare that we have the right to resist all kinds of interference directed towards the destruction of democracy." The statement blames the military for the current political crisis, charging that the current constitution and electoral law, adopted after the September 12, 1980 military coup, are the root of the conflict. The statement underscores signatories' faith in democratic processes to protect the secular republic and Turkey's democracy, but notes that new parliamentary elections alone will not resolve the impasse. A new constitution based on international values and a truly representative election system are the only way forward.

12. (U) SUMMARY AND COMMENT, cont'd. Signatories to this "counter-memorandum" include prominent intellectual leaders like writer Ahmet Altan, columnists Ali Bayramoglu, Murat Belge, and Etyen Mahcupyen, and Mazlum-Der General Director Ayhan Bilgen. Like the leftists behind the May 7 statement, the 500 people supporting this declaration have taken a brave step, forcefully rejecting those who would threaten democracy, including the guardians of the Kemalist state. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

13. (U) An informal embassy translation of the "Citizens' Declaration" follows:
The TGS memorandum published at midnight April 27, 2007, seriously wounded our already-limited democracy. The military bureaucracy's interference in the political sphere, by which we conduct politics under the shadow of weapons, is naturally unacceptable, as is political life being hostage to the military. The TGS memorandum is an open threat to democracy and it is a crime. We, the undersigned citizens, openly reject the memorandum.
Today, the crisis that we are experiencing in political, economic, and social fields is so deep that it cannot be overcome by the president's popular election. In a system where about half of the political preferences of the people would not be reflected in parliament due to existing election laws, the crisis will continue. A new general election cannot solve the crisis; it will only delay it for a short time.

The September 12 regime is totally clogged. The problems that

we encounter today have their roots in the products of the September 12 coup: the 1982 constitution and the regime it outlines. If Turkey wants to come out of this crisis permanently, it must be relieved of this constitution as soon as possible. Unless our country has a new pro-freedom, pluralist, peaceful, democratic and secular constitution based on international values and principles of law, and also adopts an election law that would enable political representation of all sectors of the society, it is not possible to render ineffective these crisis-fueled circles and this crisis-producing structure.

However, the things that we have lived through recently show that, contrary to what should happen, "there are efforts to find pretexts to convert guardianship democracy into open coup." We believe that the secular republic cannot be realized by relying on memorandums but by having more democracy. Our response to those who say that "those who do not say 'happy is he who calls himself a Turk' are our enemies" is clear: We are responsible and sensitive citizens of this Republic and we are not happy with the medium that was created. As citizens who are determined to protect free, democratic, secular Turkey, we openly declare that we have the right to resist all kinds of interference directed toward the destruction of democracy. END TRANSLATION.

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